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Research Project

The Potential for Political Violence in Argentina, Ethiopia, and Thailand:

Report on a Quantitative Analytical Model

Progress Report No. 6

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June 1975

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3.5(c)
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Progress Report No. 6 June 1975

The Potential for Political Violence in Argentina, Ethiopia, and Thailand: Report on a Quantitative Analytical Model

This is the sixth and last in a series of reports on the testing of an analytical model of political violence adapted from Ted Robert Gurr's frustration-aggression theory (*Why Men Rebel*, Princeton University Press, 1970). The Gurr theory is based on the proposition that political violence is the product of group frustrations reinforced by the belief that violence is justified and by the capability to turn the resulting politicized anger into collective aggression. The form of the ensuing violence—*turmoil* (riots or demonstrations), *insurgency* (terrorist acts or small-scale guerrilla operations), *conspiracy* (attempted coups), or *internal war* (large-scale revolutionary actions or civil war)—will depend upon the kinds of relationships which are found to exist among various types of groups in the country under examination. A complete description of the theory and of the procedures devised to operationalize it as an analytical tool is contained in an earlier OPR report of an experimental, *ex post facto* test of the model in the Chilean situation of mid-1973 (OPR 502, Revised, November 1974).

The purpose of this second phase of the project is to test the value of the Gurr model as a technique for assessing the nature and potential for political violence in societies of varying stages of development and with quite different cultural heritages and political institutions. The three countries chosen—Argentina, Ethiopia, and Thailand—seem to meet our requirements: each represents a different stage of development in a distinct geographic area, and each is confronted with domestic unrest or political conflict.

For each of the three countries, a panel of five CIA analysts assigns numerical evaluations at regular monthly intervals to the model's key variables—relative deprivation or collective frustration, belief in the justification for violence, coercive force, and institutional support. The evaluations are made for each group or "actor" which, in the panel's judgment, represents a significant political force in the country. The country's actors are also assessed in terms of their identification with four basic actor-categories: Pro-regime, mass-oriented (PR-MO); pro-regime, elite-oriented (PR-EO); anti-regime, mass-oriented (AR-MO); and anti-regime, elite-oriented (AR-EO). After each monthly assessment, the panel's evaluations are combined statistically, using computerized procedures devised in the Office of Political Research, to produce overall evaluations of the Potential for Political Violence (PPV) and of the conditions conducive to particular types of violence in the country under observation.

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NOTE: Comments or questions on this project will be welcomed by its author [redacted] 3.5(c)
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The summary below presents the principal findings from the seventh set of assessments made by the country panels in mid-June 1975. The graphs on succeeding pages display trends based on the seven sets of assessments made to date. This progress report completes the present test phase. A final wrap-up report will, as part of a general critique of the model, examine trend changes over time in the panels' scoring patterns, and thus in the model's projections of the potential and form of political violence, compared with actual developments in each of the three countries during the test period.

Summary of Principal Findings

(NOTE: The data cited below and in the following graphs are keyed to each country's Potential for Political Violence or PPV, as reflected by the median PPV score of each five-member country panel. *The figures should not be regarded as representing either probabilities or absolute quantities; they should be interpreted merely as indicating relative status or strength, compared to other variables in the model assessed by the same country panel or to corresponding variables assessed by the other two country panels.*)

General:

1. In the final month of the test period, all three countries showed increases in potential for political violence. Ethiopia continued to display the largest potential, as it has throughout the six-month period. Thailand, maintaining its relatively high level of the past two months, ranked second. Argentina, displaying a sudden upsurge, moved up to a close third behind Thailand.

2. In Argentina, conditions conducive to internal war and conspiracy increased markedly. In Ethiopia, conditions continued to tilt toward internal war and conspiracy, but with strong secondary tendencies emerging toward insurgency and turmoil. In Thailand, conditions favorable to riots and demonstrations (turmoil) continued to dominate the scene.

3. In all three countries anti-regime actors continued to show greater potential for political violence than pro-regime actors. In Argentina and Thailand, anti-regime mass actors displayed the largest potential; in Ethiopia anti-regime elite actors showed the greatest potential.

4. All three countries displayed high degrees of politicized frustration. Ethiopia continued to rank highest, while Argentina, registering a sharp jump in politicized discontent, moved into second place, slightly ahead of Thailand. Though the capability to turn this frustration into actual political violence increased somewhat in Argentina, it remained relatively stable in all three countries.

5. Concurrent with the sharp increase in potential for political violence in Argentina, the range of assessments among members of the Argentine panel widened considerably in June compared to May. The range among Ethiopian panel members remained about the same, while divergencies among members of the Thai panel narrowed sharply compared to the previous month. In Argentina and Ethiopia, divergencies between one or two outliers and other panel members continued to characterize the pattern of assessments.

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Argentina:

In the May-June period the potential for political violence in Argentina jumped to its highest level in the entire six-month test period (a PPV score of 63 in June, compared to only 46 in May). Within the limits of that considerably enlarged potential, conditions conducive to all four types of violence increased sharply, but the gains for conspiracy (11 to 17) and internal war (16 to 21) were larger than those for insurgency (9 to 11) and turmoil (10 to 14). The potential for political violence among anti-regime mass actors increased markedly (from 16 to 26). To a lesser extent, the potential among anti-regime elite actors and pro-regime elite actors also increased (13 to 18 among the former, 8 to 11 among the latter). The main factor in the large increase in PPV appeared to be the widening sense of politicized frustration (from 31 in May to 44 in June). The capability to translate that frustration into actual political violence also increased somewhat over the previous months (7 to 9 for coercive force, 8 to 10 for institutional support). Divergencies in assessments among members of the Argentine panel increased sharply in June (jumping from a range of 44 around a median PPV score of 46 in May to a range of 60 around a median PPV score of 63 in June). Analysts A and B, at the low end of the PPV scale, continued to deviate sharply from the other three panel members.

Ethiopia:

The potential for political violence in Ethiopia increased slightly in the May-June period (a PPV score of 72 in May, 75 in June). Within limits of that continuing, relatively high potential, conditions conducive to turmoil and insurgency became somewhat more apparent (an increase in PPV from 12 to 15 for turmoil, from 16 to 18 for insurgency), but conditions favorable to conspiracy and internal war (both at 21) continued to dominate. Anti-regime actors continued to display much more potential for political violence than pro-regime actors (49 for the former group, only 26 for the latter), but cutting across these categories the potential among elite actors rose slightly (13 to 16 for PR-EO, 26 to 29 for AR-EO), while that among mass actors declined somewhat (12 to 10 for PR-MO, 21 to 20 for AR-MO). Politicized frustration in Ethiopia rose from May to June (from 48 to 53), but the capacity to transform that frustration into actual political violence declined slightly (from 12 to 11 for both coercive force and institutional support). The range of variation among members of the Ethiopian panel remained about the same as in May (a range of 35 around a May median PPV score of 72, compared with a range of 36 around the June median PPV score of 75). One outlier, Analyst D, at the low end of the PPV scale, continued to deviate sharply from his colleagues bunched closely at the upper end of the scale.

Thailand:

Though the potential for political violence in Thailand increased only slightly (a PPV score of 66 in May, 67 in June), the conditions for particular types of violence shifted perceptibly during the period: conditions conducive to turmoil increased (from 22 to 26) while those favorable to the other three types remained the same or declined slightly (a continuing score of 8 for conspiracy, small declines from 18 to 16 for insurgency and from 18 to 17 for internal war). The potential for political violence for each type of actor remained

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stable, with anti-regime mass actors displaying the greatest potential (25) and pro-regime elite actors somewhat less (19). The degree of politicized frustration in the country showed little change (40 in May, 41 in June). Similarly, the capability to translate that frustration into actual political violence remained unchanged (at 13 for both coercive force and institutional support). Paralleling the relatively stable PPV pattern, the range of variation among Thai panel members narrowed considerably during the period (from a range of 44 around a May median PPV score of 66, to a range of only 20 around the June median PPV score of 67), as the previous month's outlier, Analyst E, rejoined his colleagues in a relatively small band at the middle-upper end of the scale.

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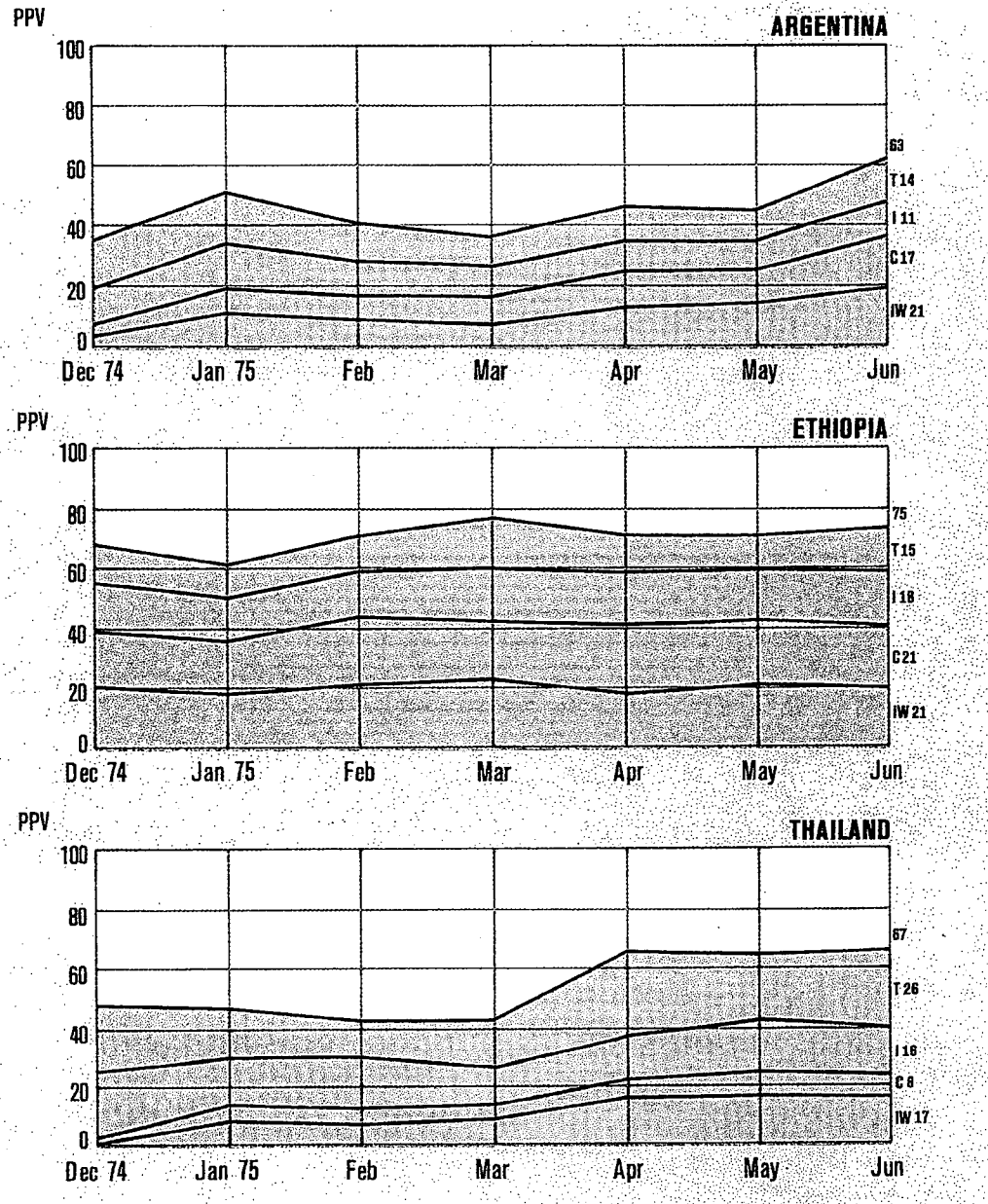
Conditions Conducive to Particular Types of Political Violence



Shaded areas represent, within the limits of each country's potential for political violence (PPV), the degree to which that country panel's median scores on key variables fulfill the conditions hypothesized by the Gurr theory as conducive to each type of political violence.

T - Turmoil
I - Insurgency
C - Conspiracy
IW - Internal War

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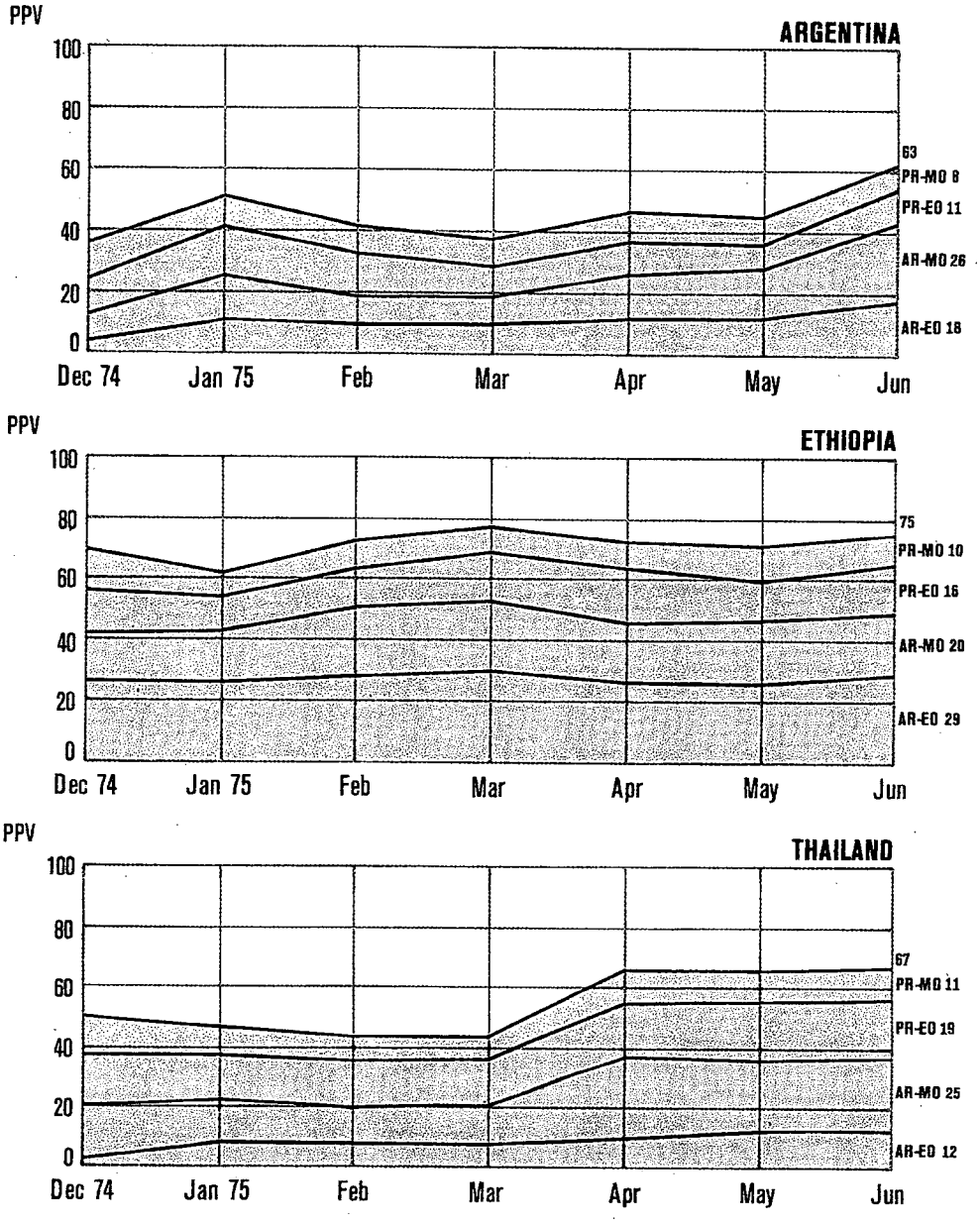
The Potential for Political Violence (PPV) for Each Type of Actor



Shaded areas represent each country panel's median scores for PPV for each actor category.

PR-MO-Pro-Regime, Mass-Oriented Actors
PR-EO- Pro-Regime, Elite-Oriented Actors
AR-MO-Anti-Regime, Mass-Oriented Actors
AR-EO- Anti-Regime, Elite-Oriented Actors

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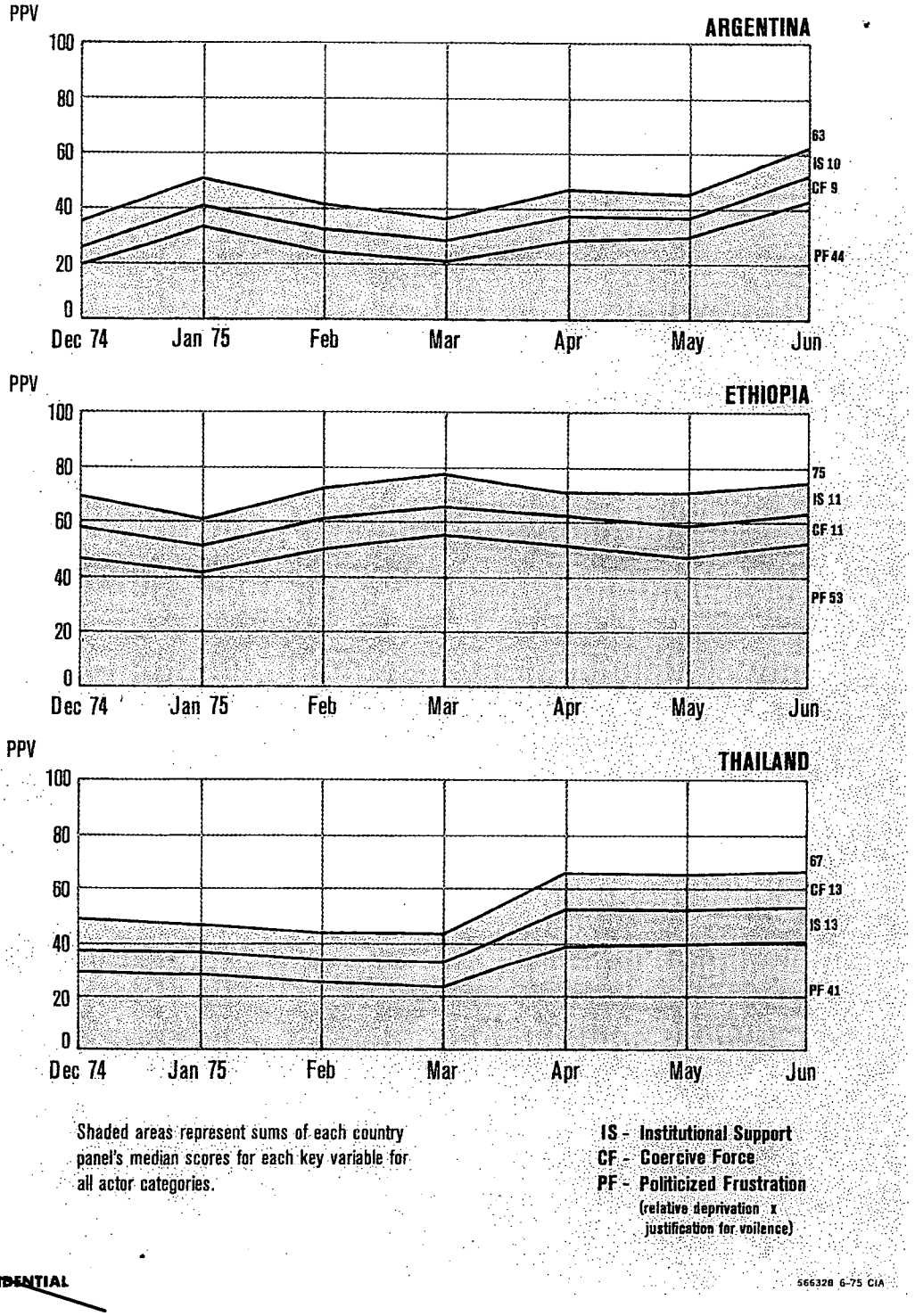
The Potential for Political Violence (PPV) in Terms of Key Variables in the Gurr Model



Shaded areas represent sums of each country panel's median scores for each key variable for all actor categories.

IS - Institutional Support
CF - Coercive Force
PF - Politicized Frustration (relative deprivation x justification for violence)

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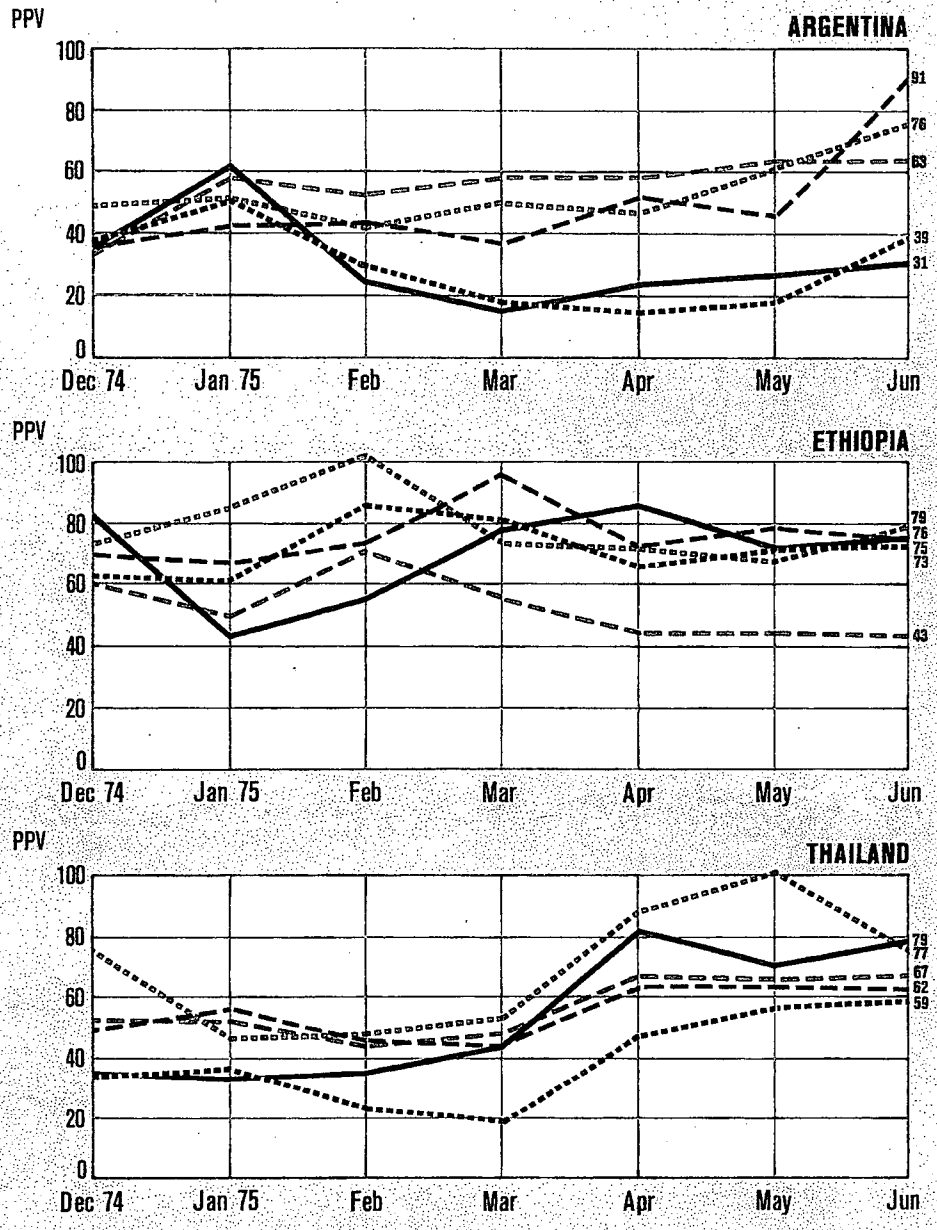
Individual Analysts' Assessments of the Potential for Political Violence (PPV)



Colored lines represent the range of individual analysts' scores for PPV around each country panel's median score for PPV.

Analyst-A
Analyst-B
Analyst-C
Analyst-D
Analyst-E

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